

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 126651

64

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMCONSUL ZAGREB

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 126651

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, AU, YO

SUBJECT:YUGOSLAV-AUSTRIAN CONTROVERSY OVER SLOVENE
MINORITY SITUATION IN CARINTHIA

REF: VIENNA 4615 (NOTAL)

1. ON MAY 28, AMBASSADOR HALUSA DELIVERED TO DEPUTY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY VINE, EUR, A COPY OF THE MAY 16
STATEMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT (PARA 2, REFTEL).
MR. VINE MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT.

2. ON MAY 29, YUGOSLAV EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY PETAR
VIDOVIC ASKED AN EUR/CE OFFICER WHETHER THE SLOVENE
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PAGE 02 STATE 126651

MINORITY ISSUE HAD BEEN RAISED DURING THE RECENT MEETING

BETWEEN SECRETARY KISSINGER AND CHANCELLOR KREISKY IN VIENNA. HE WAS TOLD THAT EUR/CE DID NOT YET KNOW WHAT WAS DISCUSSED. VIDOVIC REPEATED MANY OF THE COMPLAINTS LISTED IN THE YUGOSLAV STATEMENT OF MAY 13, EXPRESSING SUSPICION THAT AUSTRIA REALLY INTENDS TO REVISE THE TERMS OF ARTICLE 7 OF THE STATE TREATY. HE CITED VIENNA'S TWENTY-YEAR DELAY IN CARRYING OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF BAD FAITH. VIDOVIC ALSO QUESTIONED

THE NEED FOR A SPECIAL MINORITY CENSUS, STATING HIS CONVICTION THAT THE AUSTRIANS ALREADY KNOW EXACTLY HOW MANY SLOVENES THERE ARE AND WHERE THEY LIVE. AFTER ALL, HE OBSERVED, "THE NAZI GERMANS KNEW HOW MANY SLOVENES RESIDED IN CARINTHIA 42,000." (FYI: LOCAL AUSTRIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS STATE THAT THE REAL TOTAL MAY BE AS LOW AS 18,000.)

3. APPROPRIATE, NON-POLEMIC SECTIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN PUBLIC STATEMENT OF MAY 16 WERE READ TO VIDOVIC, INCLUDING THE CLEAR ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VIENNA'S UNFULFILLED OBLIGATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 7.

4. VIDOVIC STATED THAT YUGOSLAVIA INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO HOLD AUSTRIA ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE FAIR TREATMENT OF ITS SLOVENE MINORITY-- AND FOR ANY CROAT TERRORIST VENTURES LAUNCHED FROM AUSTRIAN SOIL. HE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT BELGRADE DOES NOT PLAN TO INTERNATIONALIZE THE ISSUE AT THIS TIME BY MAKING ANY FORMAL APPROACHES TO THE FOUR POWERS THAT SIGNED THE STATE TREATY.

5. VIDOVIC WAS ADVISED THAT FRIENDLY BILATERAL RELATIONS, MUTUAL TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING, AND HARMONIOUS COOPERATION BETWEEN VIENNA AND BELGRADE WOULD APPEAR TO SERVE BEST THE LARGER, LONG-RANGE INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES. HE REPLIED THAT AUSTRIA COULD MAKE THIS POSSIBLE THROUGH FULFILLING ITS OBLIGATIONS. INGERSOLL

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